be exported to Japan during 1992-93 would result in some loss in foreign exchange earnings, but would conserve our stock of high grade Bailadila iron ore.

Renewal of Iron Ore contract with Japan

1833. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem published in the Observer of the 15th January, 1992 under the caption "Renewal of iron ore contract with Japan-trip cancelled on Prime Minister's orders";

(b) whether it is a fact that the trip by an Indian delegation was cancelled by Prime Minister;

(c) if so, what were the reasons therefor?

(d) whether it is a fact that a delegation subsequently left for Japan to negotiate terms for sale of iron ore; and

(e) whether un-restricted exports of iron ore to Japan will affect the needs of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Government has seen the press report, under reference.

(b) to (d) No, Sir. The visit of the Indian delegation to Japan for negotiations with Japanese Steel Mills for export of iron ore during 1992-93 was only postponed by a few days from the middle of January, 1992 to 21st January, 1992.

(e) Requirements of domestic consumers, including Vizag Steel Plant, have been kept in view while finalising contract volume for export of iron ore to Japan for 1992-93.

Export of Ayurvedic Unani and Siddha Medicines

1834. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a tremendous increase in export of Ayurvedic, Unani and Siddha drugs during the year 1991-92;

(b) if so, what is Government's action plan to nourish such companies and to make available the required support; and

(c) how much foreign exchange has been earned from such export during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) The value of export of Ayurvedic, Unani and Siddha Medicines / drugs is indicated below:

1988-89	Rs. 6.47 Crores.
1989-90	Rs. 2.92 Crores.
1990-91	Rs. 7.29 Crores.
1991-92	Rs. 1.90 Crores.

(April to January)

Although many of the Ayurvedic, Unani and Siddha medicines have export potential, exports of these medicines have not been very significant, particularly due to problems connected with lengthy and cumbersome procedure for registration of drugs laid down by the health authorities of overseas countries. Moreover, the manufacturers of Ayurvedic Unani and Siddha Medicines do not have the same kind of clinical data to back their products up as is available for allopathic medicines. Many countries have restrictions on use of this group of medicines because of presence of Metal Oxides in them.

In order to popularise the use of Ayurvedic medicines in overseas countries, the Basic Chemical Pharmaceuticals and Cosmetics Export Promotion Council (CHEMEXCIL) Bombay, in association with a renowned Ayurvedic Research Centre have prepared a monograph on "Selected Medicinal plants" for publicity abroad and are undertaking all other usual export promotion measures such as sending promotional teams abroad and arranging buyer-seller meets. etc. to boost exports from this sector.

Price of Mica fixed by MITCO

1835. SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the floor prices fixed by MITCO for the different categories of Mica; and

(b) what is the latest position of export orders of Mica?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE